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More kids than ever participate in Lafayette Walk/Bike to School Day

By Pippa Fisher



Plenty of bikes in the bike rack on Walk/Bike to School Day Photo Pippa Fisher

arrive at school by some means other than by car. Many youngsters enjoyed the snacks and music before school. And even after the bell sounded and the kids had all trooped back into their classrooms, parents continued to congregate and enjoy coffee.

"An additional benefit is that our parent community has an opportunity to come together on campus to socialize and share a light breakfast," said Kim.

School parent Jocelyn Birrell said that she and her children often walk down Moraga Road. She referred to the previous week's cyclist versus car accident at the intersection of Moraga Road and St. Mary's Road as "horrifying" and said that it is too dangerous to let even the older children walk or bike in alone. "You should be able to let fourth- and fifth-graders go on their own - but you can't." Birrell said there are several "walking trains" with parents who take turns escorting groups of children to and from school.

Birrell commented too on the number of families who walk or bike from the Moraga Boulevard area but notes that the residential neighborhood is quickly becoming a "cut through" for speeding motorists trying to avoid traffic on Mt. Diablo Boulevard.

A regular cyclist who gets her children to school on bikes most days, Stefania Kapalanes, a trauma coordinator in a Bay Area hospital, was taking the opportunity to talk to some of the children about bike safety. She said she spotted one young girl with her helmet secured too loosely to be effective. The student had told her she didn't want to mess up her hair and that she lived very nearby. Kaplanes made the point that the child was saying "all the 'right' wrong things."

Kim says they are grateful to the PTA who sponsors the event and to Champion. "We continue to work with the city to educate our families (students and parents) about pedestrian safety and safe routes to and from school."

Says Champion, "I think we have an amazing community in Lafayette where families enjoy walking downtown on the weekends."

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